

NEWS

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Postmus Talks Economics During State of the County Address

ONTARIO, Calif. – Board of Supervisors Chairman Bill Postmus proclaimed the state of the County of San Bernardino is “strong and getting stronger” and outlined an ambitious plan to boost the county’s economic development efforts before a packed Ontario Convention Center audience during his State of the County Address today.

Speaking to approximately 1,100 county residents, elected officials, business leaders and community leaders, Chairman Postmus also detailed the county’s challenges and accomplishments in a multitude of areas, especially public safety – namely crime prevention, flood control, and fire prevention.

The emphasis, however, was on economic development as Chairman Postmus unveiled a proposal to re-energize the county’s efforts to attract employers to our communities.

“Our newly retooled, and more importantly – better-funded – economic development program will help us maintain and improve an environment that’s open for business,” Chairman Postmus said.

Mr. Postmus called for the formation of a new Economic Development Agency within the county organization that would report directly to County Administrative Officer Mark Uffer. He also said the county must:

- Ensure that workforce-training programs can provide businesses with the workers they need.
- Provide businesses with a solid point of contact for information on locations and regulatory processes.

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- Carry out marketing and public relations programs that make businesses aware of the county's rapidly expanding, young, and highly skilled workforce.

Chairman Postmus also spoke about the many challenges that have faced the county recently, and how the county has dealt with those challenges to the benefit of residents. He pointed out that although the county is in the midst of its rainiest season in recorded history – this coming one year after unprecedented fires denuded virtually every watershed above the San Bernardino valley – much less destruction has occurred than in past rainy seasons thanks to the efforts of several county departments.

"Although lives have tragically been lost in some of our more severe storms, the county's efforts have certainly helped prevent many more tragedies from occurring," Chairman Postmus said.

He also commended county agencies, other governmental organizations, business, and community groups for continuing to effectively deal with the bark beetle infestation that has caused severe tree mortality in the county's mountains.

During his State of the County Address, Chairman Postmus:

- Pointed out how the county's restructuring of the financial organization of the County Fire Department will ensure future solvency and maximize service levels.
- Commended the Sheriff's Department and District Attorney for stepping up the county's war against gangs, and outlined the Board of Supervisors' efforts to relieve jail overcrowding by leasing jail space in Adelanto.
- Recognized the Sheriff and Supervisor Gary C. Ovitt for making information on sex offenders more accessible to the public.
- Cited the county's accomplishments in the Public Health arena, specifically the ABC restaurant grading system, the fight against West Nile Virus, flu vaccinations for the elderly, and performance contracts for ambulance providers.

Chairman Postmus concluded his address by stating that the county's tremendous economic growth presents many challenges, but that those challenges can also present themselves as opportunities – specifically to bring more and better-paying jobs and a better quality of life for all county residents.

"We need to be creative in our approach to growth challenges, and work cooperatively among our local, state and federal agencies and community organizations," Chairman Postmus said. "If we do that, the state of our county will get even stronger."